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Homecoming

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Fine Arts

Image Arts / Film

School of Film and Animation

College of Imaging Arts and Sciences

Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester, NY

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Abstract

A 30-minute narrative, based on a true story, Homecoming is about a journey of a family returning to Taiwan for father's funeral and disputing on the control with the uncle because of the cultural differences between Western (USA) and Eastern (Hakka). Through this event, Christian and Hakka conventions on death would be revealed, and reflects the spirits of life in two ways. However, the two generations would eventually find each other the common thing, the love of family.

Pre-production of this overseas production happened in Rochester and Taiwan. The shoot was scheduled for 6 days in Taiwan only. The Budget was originally proposed for \$10,000, but increased to \$25,000 in the end with gaining professional crews and enlarging the production value. The production had been completed in May 2009 with the major sponsor, Taiwan Hakka TV, who covered the entire budget.

The production report focuses on the process how to resolve finance need and execute intense pre-production and shooting in Taiwan.

****HAKKA** - The Chinese characters for Hakka literally means, "Guest Families". The Hakka's ancestors were often said to have arrived from what is today's central China centuries ago. In a series of migrations, the Hakkas moved, settled in their present locations in southern China, and then often migrated overseas to various countries throughout the world. The worldwide population of Hakkas is about 80 million, though the number of Hakka-language speakers is fewer. Hakka people have had a significant influence on the course of Chinese and world history: in particular, they have been a source of many revolutionary, government, and military leaders.*

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Story Idea

The story idea came from my trip back to Taiwan in 2007 summer for my uncle's funeral. His family returned with cremains in an urn after immigrating to South Africa for 20 years. In my memories, I barely met this man, but only sometimes heard my relatives talking about his irresponsibility towards the family and failure on business. My aunt often made international calls to my mom via Skype and complained how my uncle broke her heart again and again; the sisters always ended up in crying together. Nothing showed he was a good husband or father. At the night before the funeral, I listened to my aunt and cousins talking about how much paperwork they had been going through to make this trip happen. I could not help asking a question in my mind that was this guy worth tears? At the funeral, my cousins delivered a speech in front of people, and it answered all my questions.

"I still remember the day we took the flight from Taiwan to South Africa. So many years have passed since then and we've been through a lot. I know you always tried hard for the family although you didn't show it. We know in our hearts that you tried very hard. Wherever you are now, I'm sure you are in a place of peace."

You can choose your family. But you can choose a way to love them. Love, that is all family about.

In the end of the funeral, another situation came up and shocked me again. A loud roar came from outside. A few of my other older relatives argued about this Christian style funeral. There were conflicts between the two different cultures, Christian (western) and Hakka (eastern). This fact also inspired to write this story and delivered a message: **Without understanding, cultural difference could damage a relationship.**

Pre-Production, Rochester NY

Where was the money from?

Homecoming was an overseas production and the shoot was set in the small village in Taiwan. The minimum budget was proposed from ten thousand to twenty-five thousand dollars depending on the production scale. The thesis committee had many concerns about the high risk of failing in the production due to financial difficulty. I understood the situation, but I did not have evidences or plans to proof that I could be able to resolve the issue. All I had was confidence and ambition. However, this could be a great opportunity to learn the reality of film production in business way. I believed, sooner or later, when I walked out of RIT to start my film career, the ability to raise money would always be the first issue for me to deal with. Why not start taking the challenge now for my MFA thesis?

I was grateful to my committee, Malcolm and Nancy, for supporting and inspiring on my project. Their faith in my ambition and encouragement to my goal played a big role in the beginning of the production. In May 2008, the project was approved and the adventure was about to begin.

First Attempt: Taiwan Government Fund for Short Films *

Each year, the Motion Picture Development Foundation of R. O. C (Taiwan) will sponsor six to ten selected short film productions with a grant up to fifty thousand dollars. The applicant can only be the producer or a licensed film production company in Taiwan. In June 2008, one month before the submitting deadline, I returned to Taiwan and started working on the application. With my friend's recommendation, I met with a producer, Mr. Hsu, who has successfully won the grant several times. I briefed him the story idea and he liked it. He committed to help me apply the grant right away. He assigned me to focus on writing the script while he prepared all other paperwork including budget, shooting schedule, cast, and team list. On June 30th 2008, the last submission day, the application was sent out along with the first draft of Homecoming, and the final list would be announced

in October 2008. Mr. Hsu told me he had strong confidence on this project to win the grant, but the waiting was killing me. I was nervous to bet all my chips on one card.

Freelance works

From July to August 2008, I also directed two thirty-second TV commercials to make three thousand dollars in Taiwan. This was a good start. However, I prayed for the Taiwan Government fund every night.

RIT Callahan Production Grant

When I returned to RIT in September 2008, Homecoming was honored to receive the Callahan Production Grant for \$1,000 from RIT. It may not be a big amount, but I strongly encourage every RIT student to apply for the grant as a small step to start with your MFA thesis.

Failure on the Taiwan Government Short Films Fund

In October 2008, the final list of the Taiwan Government Short Films Fund was announced on their website. I went on the page but did not see my name. I kept refreshing the web page, and the result remained the same. I felt like I was not lucky to get the right river card as I expected, lose all the chips, and then leave the poker table with my head down. Meanwhile, I was also in the middle of developing the script and struggling to make it better. I was holding my breath with all the pressure. That was one of the most frustrating moments in the process of pre-production.

The pressure from the budget limited the boundary of my creativity. Many times when I wrote a scene, such as the crowds in background or a crashed car, I worried about how much it would cost. I realized that being stuck in this situation, I would never have a chance to make this film.

After a few days of the depression, I realized that at least I had four thousands for budget. Beyond all it was only a good story that would make a good film. I still had faith in my story. I decided to leave the budget issue behind me and committed

myself only to concentrate on the script. Two Months later, in December 2008, after numerous times of revising, I finally felt comfortable to present the story to my thesis committee and look for advises. Furthermore, it was time for me again to pick up the role of a producer and hopefully find some money.

Another attempt: Asian Culture Organizations

This time my goal was to obtain sponsorship from Asian cultural organizations in east coast of USA. From January to February 2009, I started to approach the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York, Hakka Affairs Council in New York, and other Asian American communities, with a proposal to present the story idea and production plan. All the effort was to convince them that the production of Homecoming was not only creative but also practical. Most people who I spoke to were interested in the story, but did not see a reason to invest a student project. After lots of emails and calls back and forth, I was still not able to raise any money in this way. However, during the process, I learned a great lesson; for your potential investors, you do not convince them about how good your movie is going to be, but what a good investment it is for them.

Pre-Production – Taiwan

In the end of February 2009, I came back to Taiwan and continued to work on pre-production. I had 4 weeks to achieve the goal to start the shoot by the end of March, and there were tons of things that needed be done. I figured that establishing a team and raising enough money were the most two crucial missions.

To form a production team, a producer and D.P. are the two keys for me. Before I went back to Taiwan, I had already contacted with Isadora Huang (producer) and Johnson Chiang (D.P.). Both of them are the experienced and talented professionals in the industry. At the first meeting, both of them offered their full support to his project even though I could not guarantee if it was a paid job or volunteer effort. Within one week, they quickly helped establish a team of fifteen people in each department.

Casting: the leading actor came last on board

To find our cast efficiently in four weeks before shooting, Isadora decided not to set up an open audition but search through her network. Isadora asked me to describe each character in detail and then she would suggest me a couple of candidates. We intensively met together to review headshots or reels on the Internet, make calls, or contact talents immediately; in this way, we almost successfully casted all the roles in a week, except for Sin-Min, the main character in the story.

The challenge for the role as Sin-Min requests the skill of three languages: Mandarin, English, and Hakka. In addition, he would present an “American-Orientated” manner with the experience of living in America for twenty years, but was still familiar with Hakka culture that was influenced by his mother. In Taiwan, there are many talented actors who can speak fluent English, but only few know or remember Hakka. Two weeks pasted and two more weeks before the shoot, I have not met my leading actor yet. I was nervous; on the other hand, I was kind of glad that I have created this character, because Hakka culture would fade away if no one tried to

preserve it. Then Isadora came up with an idea maybe I could play the role of Sin-Min, but I refused immediately for not to destroy my film.

The next day, I met my Sin-Min surprisingly. This guy was Eric, who came to my temporary office as a talent agent of Leandro (who plays Denny). When I rehearsed with Leandro, Eric helped me introduced Hakka culture to Leandro. Eric is a Hakka, too. I quickly recognized his “Asian American” accent in English and Mandarin when he spoke to Leandro. His talk was quiet and sincere, and it just sounded like Sin-Min to me. Then I asked his help to work on the lines together with Leandro. They have tried a couple of scenes as I instructed and both of them impressed me a lot. Without any hesitation, I asked Eric if he was interested in playing the role of Sin-Min in the film. Eric told me he actually loved acting and had played in a few TV dramas before. But his accent became his weakness and limited his opportunities in Taiwan. I told him not to worry about it because it fit in my film perfectly. Later we discussed about the story further, and he was surprised that the events of my story had just happened to him last year. His family had huge argument with his uncle on his father’s funeral, because his uncle tried to take the control of the entire funeral. I was not sure about all these connections between Eric, me, and the story, were a just coincident or fate, but I knew I had finished with all the casting in two weeks before shooting.

Locations

More than half of the scenarios in the story happen in a courtyard with three direction’s house around, the most typical property style in Hakka culture. My grandfather’s place was initially designed to be the main location in the film, where many of my relatives currently live. My relatives still keep antique furniture and this provides rich materials for production design. With my family’s permission and support, I could access to the entire space and save on the film’s budget at this location.



My DP disagreed with my decision at first sight when we scouted the location. He thought the house did not present the traditional Hakka style because it has been remodeled with steel. Besides, there are too many distracting facilities around the house, such as high-voltage transmission tower, electricity cables, and high-speed railway bridge. He said this ugly house was a tragedy of Hakka Architecture.

I had to admit that his saying made a strong point but I hesitated to change my mind. Basically the story was based on the house. When I wrote the script, I had already seen the story happening in the place. This location was the only fact that I secured for pre-production and the important reason why I was confident about the project. Changing the location would force me to revise my entire shooting plan again. Johnson strongly suggested that I take a look some other places before I made my mind. Due to my respect for Johnson, I accepted his suggestion.

The next day, he drove me around in his hometown, Yuanli. It was a lovely village in countryside with many well-preserved houses in traditional Hakka style. We stopped by some of the houses randomly and asked owners for the permission to shoot. After three or four failing attempts, I figured out it would just not work in this way and we were only wasting time. Johnson insisted on one last try before we gave up.

We kept on another aimless drive for about 30 minutes and I had already lost all my patience. Suddenly the car stopped. I could not believe what I saw in front of me. There was a house that looked exactly same as described on the script.

“The car moves towards a brick three-sided courtyard house. The house faces a wide rice field and there is a car-wide road in between. Before entering the road, the car passes a longan tree, as green as the rice field, on a small hill.”



Not only the beautiful brick style in the countryside, this house also provided every space that the script required, such as bedrooms, dining area, and backyard. Besides, there was a forest in background with an opening view in front and it gave much more depth in the framing from any angles. I was excited to visit the owner and introduce our purpose. He did not answer us right away. After 2 days of continuous visiting, we successfully persuaded the owner to let us shoot at his place. Finally I had a home to shoot "Homecoming".

During that 2 days Johnson also took me to visit places for other locations, such as a church, Tao temple, freeways, rice field, and other exterior scenes. With his connections, we also confirmed all the locations we needed quickly in two weeks before the shoot.



Surprisingly all these locations are within 10 miles around the brick house. Johnson finally disclosed that he already had the plan when he read the script at first sight. I sincerely appreciated his contribution not only on visual achievement but also on his producing ability.

Equipments – HD Camera packages with reasonable price

In 2007, the Red One, a 4K digital cinema camera, first came to the market at the NAB show in Las Vegas. It was like a dream-come-true for filmmakers to pursue cinematic looking on their works without paying for film rolls. I brought this idea to my DP, Johnson, and asked for a possibility to shoot on the Red One. Although my budget could not afford the Red One for market price, with understanding of my low

budget situation, Johnson helped me connect with several rental houses and film schools. We spent five days traveling around Taiwan and tried to find a bargain. Most of the places only provided a package with both camera and lights, and none of these places could offer a price lower than ten thousand dollars. However, I have learned that the RED One system would demand much more lighting equipments and works on set and a complicated procedure of file converting in post-production. According to these facts, I realized that the RED ONE was not a realistic idea. I was disappointed with the result and the days that had been wasted.

At the same time, another RIT Sofa student, Tzu-Hui, was also working on her thesis production in Taiwan. We contacted each other and decided to bargain on the equipments with the same rental house. This time my DP and her DP helped us negotiate with the owner and resulted in a great deal with SONY HD Camera (F900) for five thousands. The deal included the camera, lights, dolly, grip equipments, supplies, two camera assistants, and two gaffers. I was grateful that Tzu-Hui had shared her resources with me. Without her help, this unbelievable deal would never happen.

After the process of hunting digital cinema cameras, I learned a lesson. Nowadays the new digital cinema cameras are being introduced with even greater frequency and filmmakers may have many less expensive choices to shoot in digital ways. However, directors should also study hard to learn the foundation knowledge of these new cinema photography technologies and choose the most practical one for their projects, but not gone crazy in chasing the most updated one.

The Changing meeting

From the first day when I arrived in Taiwan to start the pre-production, I had been consistently meeting with many producers and looking for any sponsorship. The pressure became bigger and bigger everyday since pre-production had been moving on and each department was waiting for money to work. In two weeks before the shooting, I still had not heard any good news yet for the budget. My parents worried about me and generously offered to borrow me ten thousands for this production,

but I refused. However, I began to question myself if I should dismiss my crews and start my entire thesis project over again with a smaller production scale. At the most frustrating moment, the actress, Chi-Yang, playing the role of the mother, led me an opportunity to present my project to Hakka TV, a TV station operated by Taiwan government. Hakka TV is the largest organization that has the most resources to promote Hakka culture in Taiwan. However, I did not have any confidence about this chance, because in 2008 summer, I had already sent out a couple of emails to Hakka TV and ask for sponsorship on the project. There was not any response back then. Before the meeting, I said to my producer that this would be my last try or I would postpone the production.

The meeting was set up on the day after Chi-Yang mentioned this idea to me. Although it happened in a short time, I was able to prepare a well-structured proposal with my previous experience of pre-production for six months. Chi-Yang had strong connection with Hakka TV station because she had played in many drama series produced by them. With Chi-Yang's recommendation, I walked into the office of Mr. Tom, the vice president and programming director at Hakka TV station.

In the meeting, Mr. Tom slowly and carefully read the proposal while I briefed my production plan. And then came a long silence. Finally Mr. Tom spoke, "I like the story. How much do you need?" Finally all my hard works in pre-production turned out to be good results.

With Mr. Tom's full support, Hakka TV was willing to sponsor twenty-five thousand dollars on the project. We had several meetings later and went through all the production details regarding casting, locations, crews, and shooting schedule. Although they still had doubts if I could handle a production in such a complicated scale, they encouraged me to make this film the way I had envisioned it without compromise. Finally, with almost eight months of consistent attempts, I was able to raise enough money in one week before the shoot.

The final agreement between me and Hakka TV was: Hakka TV provides all the budget as I proposed for twenty-five thousands; I produce one 40-minute film (to

combine with breaks and director's interview for one our program) based on the script of Homecoming and the production will be executed at the same level listed on the proposal. Both Hakka TV and I would own the copyrights to use the film only with no commercial purpose. (Hakka TV is a Non-profit public TV station.) Hakka TV has the privilege to air Homecoming on its channel with unlimited runs.

"After the first screening of the 30-minute version at RIT in May 2009, I continued to edit another version in 40-minute for Hakka TV and finished in a month. In this version, the pace of dialogues remained the same, and all the shots of transition and characters' expression had been cut back to the film as how I shot."

The unexpected death

On March 25th, six days before the shoot, we received sad news that Chi Yang's father died of cancer and she had to cancel the shoot with us. I was so sorry for her, but I had to find another actress to replace Chi-Yang immediately. I quickly arranged casting calls, but in such a rush, most qualified talents were booked already. Isadora, my producer, suggested me to postpone the shoot so that we could have more time to prepare for everything. However, We were not sure about how long this timeout would last.

In the process of pre-production, I had experienced many crucial moments but nothing could compete with this situation. Once I canceled the shoot at this moment, I did not have control to get my whole team back in the future or keep the condition as the same in each department. I was nervous if I would have to start all pre-production over again. Suddenly, I had no ideas on my next move.

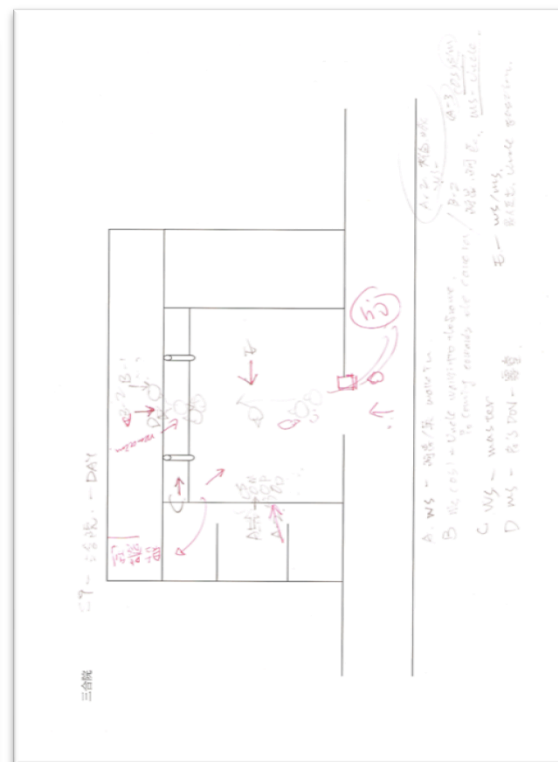
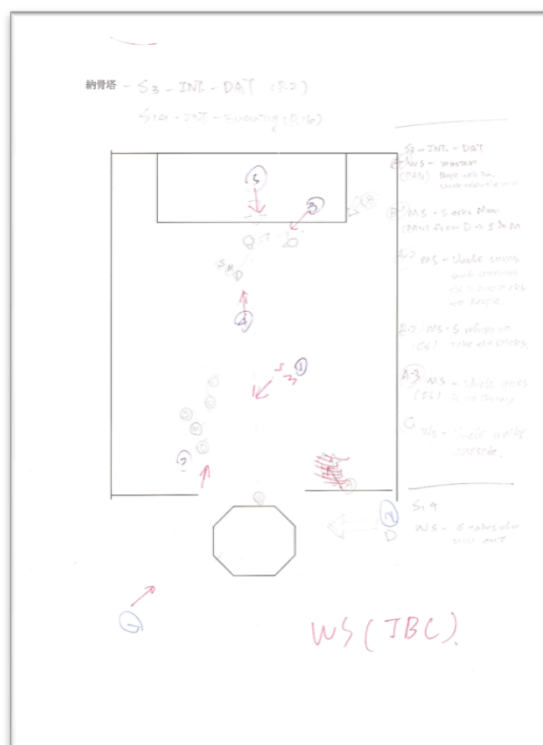
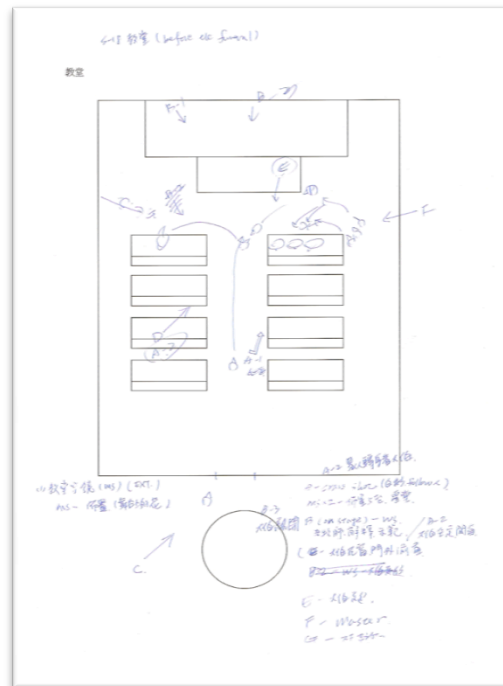
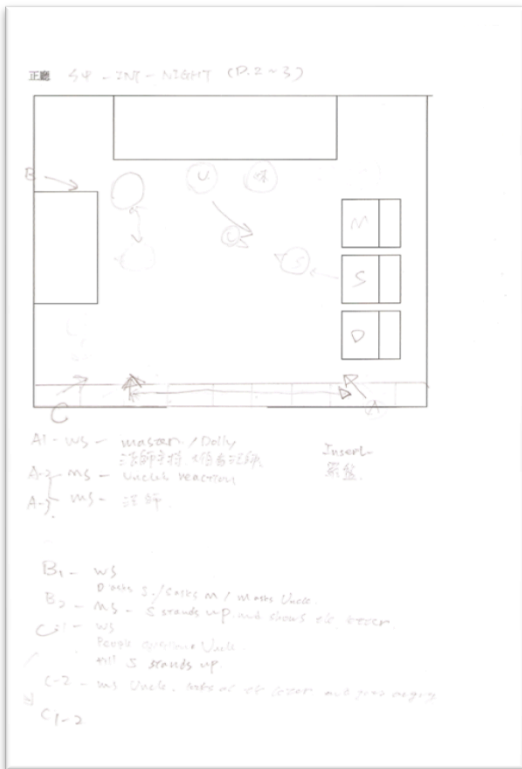
The next day, Chi-Yang called me and discussed the possibility to continue the production with her. She asked for a week to take care of her family and then she could come back to join us. I respected her professional attitude, but I did not agree with her proposal right away. I concerned about the difficulty for her to deal with two funerals at the one time: one in the film, and the other in reality. She told me that she felt a strong connection with this story and a responsibility to finish it. I could not imagine how much sacrifice she made for this decision and sincerely appreciated for it.

After confirming with Chi-Yang, I quickly contact each department to delay the shoot for a week, from March 31st to April 6th. Luckily enough we did not have trouble to make this change with all the crews. Moreover, in the additional 5 days, I finally had a chance to study the script as a director and prepare the shot list.

Shooting

Directing Method – Shot List & Ground plan

With a fixed and tight shooting schedule of 6 straight days with no pick-up shoots, I did not have a chance to make a mistake on set when directing. Storyboards could help pre-visualize and finalize all the shots, but it would not be possible for me to finish it in 5 days. Therefore, I decided to work only with shot lists. To prepare a practical shot list, I continued the method that I had practiced in my 1-Quarter and 2-Quarter films at RIT. Due to my theatre background, the performance is always the first thing in front of the camera. To create a list, I would use a pencil to draw different blocking on the ground plan and only the final blocking would be kept on the paper to indicate the precise movement and positioning of actors in each scene. During the process, the scene had been rehearsed in my mind as well as my directing on set. After blocking was confirmed, arrows would be placed on the ground plan to indicate the camera positions, and the numbers of camera/lighting set-up could be generated. In the end, the sizes of the frames or any special requests would be noted on the paper as well. In this way, I actually did not write a clear list for shots, but presented my thoughts visually by drawing on the paper. This method will not only help me anticipate the challenges on set, but also provide me a guiding principle to communicate with crews.



Day1

It was supposed to be an easy day to start with a few exterior day scenes and gradually teamed up all the crews. But we had problems mounting the camera on the car, because the original system did not fit our prop car (my dad's car). My crews had to add a few more rigs to hold the heavy Sony F-900 camera for safety. It took us almost two hours to get ready for the first car shot. Then we faced another issue with the front windshield tint; it cut down too much light and resulted in awkward color temperature. Besides, the car scenes happened on the freeway and in the mountains, and these transitions aggravated the difficulty to adjust camera settings. We ended up our first day with almost 3 hours delayed. This kind of problem was actually avoidable if we had run a test with the special equipments before. I learned a lesson from day one: on set, the technical part could also go wrong. Do not get lucky. Get prepared.

Day2

After a full day shoot in the house, I realized there was too much talking in the script and this kind of style limited blocking in the scene and camera positions also. The shooting process had been repeated from master-shot to 2-side-medium-shot or inserts. Moving around lighting set-up again and again exhausted the crews. When I looked at viewfinder, I saw strong emotion expressed by the actors, but did not see a story happening. My story line was driven by conversation among characters' meeting or arguing, but not by characters' discovering. I had learned these basic disciplines at the first class of script writing and finally understood why.

Day3

The main goal to achieve today was to finish all 5 scenes in the central hall. There was even more conversation to deal with than yesterday. I was worried about the same frustrating experience would be faced again. Before the shoot, I went to ask for Johnson's advice on this concern. Johnson commented that I was a director who knew what he was doing and encouraged me to focus on the performance. His

response helped me concentrate to work with the actors and trust the crews would take care of the rests. By turning into a positive attitude, I found myself more confident to direct actors and started enjoying the pressure on set.

Day4

Finally we had done most of the scenes in the house and moved on to the church. Everything went smoothly as scheduled; all the crews worked together as a team, and the actors behaved like a family. We ended today with the beautiful night scene at the church. It was the first time we finished a day in 10 hours.

I was the last one to step out the church and turned off the light. I was nervous, because the next day we would come back here to shoot the most complicated fight scene with crowds. However, it was the only scene I did not have a shot list. I only had rough ideas about how to start the scene, but did not have control of what exactly the characters would do when the chaos happened. I tried to come up something at night, but my body was exhausted already.

Day5

At the beginning of the day our only job was rehearsing. All the crews were only standing by and watching me direct. In the first hour, the A.D. was busy settling down the crowd of 30 people to be seated, while I explained what would be going on in the scene with the main actors. After I introduced them the position of where the uncle interrupted the funeral and took away the urn, spontaneously they were starting to develop what to do next in groups based on their characters. The uncle, the son (Eric), and the mother, moved together to practice how to fight with the urn. The Taoist Priest demonstrated how he would irritate the crowds with his gang, so that the younger son (Denny) could react to block them. At the same time, the A.D. was leading the crowd to anticipate into what they saw. One of the crowd actors even requested to leave the set, because the scene seemed too real and got him scared. By all their distribution, my job became easily to only make choices among their developments. Afterward, the lighting and camera crews joined the teamwork

together. In another 1.5 hours, eventually we operated the first take. I was panic to work on set without a shot list at first time. However, all the efforts my team created together made this complicated scene clear to understand and easy to follow.

After 8 hours of hard work on this scene, we moved on to the ending scene in the film, where the two groups merged into one line on the narrow countryside path to the graveyard. When the younger son (Denny) handed the urn to the uncle, I saw every crew released and smiling. Right before sunset, we wrapped up the day and were happy to get all the shots.

Day6

On the last day, also the only day, we finished a day in 8 hours as how it's scheduled.

Under the pressure on set, the shot list is the necessary to help a director to control the schedule. However, during the process of my shooting, I had been relied on the shot list too much and lost the opportunities for other possible creative shots. The realistic conditions always change on set. I could have been more flexible and open to work with my team and trust my instincts to make a call, even though it was against the original plan.

Post-Production

Compared to pre-production and shooting, post-production was the easiest part in the production. After the shooting in Taiwan, I returned to RIT and started to edit immediately. In 2009 spring, school of film and animation had just upgraded a few more editing rooms with MAC computers and Final Cut Pro Studio. Benefited by accessing to these facilities, I was able to intensively edit 10 hours a day with high definition (1920x1080) footage in the format of ProRes 422. With rich amount of coverage in 360 minutes footage (shooting ration 12:1), I was able to edit the film as planed in the script. There was not much change on the structure, and the most effort was about adjusting timing. Within 1 month, the first draft had been cut in the length of 35 minutes. When the first cut was presented to my committee head, Malcolm Spaul, I received positive responses and only a few shots and sound issues needed fixed. It was really a great encouragement for me to complete the film after a long way coming from pre-production. After 2 weeks of work, at 3rd attempt, the final version had been successfully trimmed to be 30 minutes without compromises. In the end of May 2009, all post-production work, including color correction, composing, audio mixing, and title sequence design, had been completed.

Screenings and Awards

RIT SOFA Screenings

In November 2009, Homecoming was officially presented at 2009 Fall SOFA screenings and received many of positive responses. During the screening, I could hear consistent and loud reactions; especially when the urn was broken, the moment really held the audience's breathe. Some audience commented the film as shot in detail, well-paced, balanced with humor and sad, and ended in a smart way. I was glad that the audience could recognize the humor between the cultural differences and connected to the mother's grief. In the most comments, the mother and the uncle were the most understandable and successful characters.

Meanwhile, I also received criticisms about the weakness of the character of Sin-Min. Compared to other characters, he needed more development in the connection with his father and the conflict in the story that made him change. Another criticism was the film seemed too short and rush. I totally agreed with the points. In my opinion, there were too many story lines and characters involved in the film. In the length of a short film, I should only make either Sin-Min or the mother the leading character and present the story from the point of view. Or I could have developed the story into a feature film.

2010 Seoul International Drama Awards

In September 2010, after almost a year entering the cycle of international film festivals, Homecoming was officially selected at the Seoul International Drama Awards, and I was nominated for the best director. It was a great honor to be competed with masterpieces, such as *The Summit (Canada)*, directed by Nick Copus, and *The Last Days of Lehman Brothers (U.K.)*, produced by BBC. The award went to Nick Copus.

This award was also an important key for me to open the door to Taiwan Film Industry. My story in Seoul had been covered by Chinese medias on TV, Internet, and Newspaper, in Taiwan and Los Angeles.

Other Screenings

Homecoming was aired on Hakka TV in Taiwan in September 2010 and gain wisely positive response on Internet. Hakka TV aired second round in May 2011. * *(There might be other runs that I did not have details, because Hakka TV has the right to air the program at will.)*

In September 2012, invited by Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Los Angeles, Homecoming was screened in the George Lucas Building at the USC School of Cinematic Arts. In the Q&A section, I had exchanged my experience on this production with USC film students and my observations on the issue of the cultural difference with the Asian-American audience.

After Homecoming

The success of Homecoming helped me establish reputation in Taiwan and led me an opportunity to direct a feature TV-Movie, The Music Class Never Ends. This production was granted with one hundred and fifty thousands by Taiwan Ministry of Culture, and had been completed in Oct 2012. The premiere was aired on Taiwan Public Service channel in May 2013.

The work of Homecoming has definitely been one milestone in my film career. However, it does not guarantee me a career in film in the future. It only takes up the space of one line on my resume. Producers might have called me to discuss projects and in fact, those are the people who have seen Homecoming but not interested in talking about Homecoming. They are only interested in knowing if I write a new story.

It is the good stories (a good one, then a good one, then a good one, then a good one) that will guarantee a career. Therefore, I have been in the process of developing a script based on a true story, which is about a lone sex offender's wife learning to be strong without other choices left for her. Meanwhile, I am also consistently directing all kinds of works in L.A. and Taiwan, such as: TV commercials, documentaries, music videos, and web-promotions.

Appendix 1 – Proposal

FATHER'S LAST WISH

BY

POSHNEG CHIANG

MFA Film/ Live Action

SCHOOL OF FILM AND ANIMATION

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

May 2008

Adviser:

Malcolm Spaul

Nancy Gertner

Mark Foggetti

FATHER'S LAST WISH

BY POSHENG CHIANG
ADVISOR: MALCOLM SPAULL

START TIME: MAY 08 | END TIME: MAY 25
RUN TIME: 20 MINS | FORMAT: HD
BUDGET: \$1,175

TREATMENT

*Daniel
to be
stronger.*

ERIC, 26, Taiwanese, and his stepbrother, **DANIEL**, a Caucasian boy, bring Mr. Chang's urn back home from Rochester, USA. In the living room **MRS. CHIANG**, 53, watches the urn and says, "That's it?" Eric hands an envelope over to Mrs. Chang and says, "He became a Christ and wanted a Christian funeral."

burial

Two Eric's uncles, **JIN** and **FONG**, come to visit Eric and present him an organized plan on Mr. Chang's funeral. Jin says, "We will provide a luxury funeral at his hometown to your dad since he hasn't been here for a long time." Eric shows the envelope to them. After watching the mail, Jin and Fong get pissed off. "It must be your fault!" they point Daniel and leave. Mrs. Chang hands the urn over to Eric, "Just do what he wants although he never consider about us."

Chinese funeral

Eric Chang stands on the stage in the church in Taiwan countryside. Mrs. Chang and Daniel sit in the auditorium. Erick speaks out to people firmly, "my father wanted to be buried in a Christian way." The funeral starts and the organ plays as the priest walks onto the stage.

While the priest addresses, Jin and Fong and a Buddhist priest walk into the church. Jin steps straightly towards the priest and grabs the microphone from him. Fong yells to people, "It's our home, and we should go with our way! Don't insult my brother." The Buddhist priest waves chicken feathers towards Daniel and curses him, "He's the devil. Don't trust him." Daniel is frightened. Eric runs in front of Daniel to protect him. Jin and Fong keep roaring with anger, "You all go to the hell!" They assign the Buddhist priest to set another funeral. Daniel holds Mrs. Chiang who is crying out in the corner. Eric is running back and forth between his uncles and Mother.

*Church
in Taiwan*

The Buddhist priest occupies half of the. The priest holds a cross and tries to drive him away. Eric loses his control that he fights with his uncles. People in the auditorium are screaming.

Suddenly Mrs. Chang goes to grab the microphone on the stage and speaks out firmly to people, "I will make my husband's last wish and his sons will take care of it". People stop to watch her. Mrs. Chang goes to take Mr. Chang's urn and picture and hands those to Eric and Daniel. They walk out of the church.

On the way to the cemetery, Eric holds Mr. Chang's picture and walks at the first. Daniel holds the urn and walks after them. All other people walk after the family in two lines. The priest read Bible loudly and the Buddhist priest plays a suona horn hard and waves the chicken feather. The chill wind is blowing. Erick holds Mrs. Chiang's hand and tells her, "Don't worry, mom. It's all gonna be over."

FATHER'S LAST WISH

2

BY POSHENG CHIANG
ADVISOR: MALCOLM SPAULL

START TIME: MAY 08 | END TIME: MAY 09
RUN TIME: 20 MINS | FORMAT: HD
BUDGET: \$1,1781

Concept

This story is based on my cousin's true story. I went to my uncle's funeral in this spring. And I saw the conflict with different cultures. However, for my cousin and aunt, family is family. No matter what, the relationship never changes. While they made a speech at the funeral, I was really moved and touched by their love. Even though my uncle seems not a good father.

Approach

--Shoot in Taiwan

This film will be shot in Taiwan where I am very familiar. It's easier for me to find locations and casts because I know many theater groups, actor agencies, and other professional actors. My brother and sister used to go to the church in Taiwan so that I have resources to get a church to shoot. I'm also familiar with film schools and production houses in Taiwan, where I can borrow or rent all the equipments with a cheap price. The most important thing is, after the education at RIT in the past two years, I'd like to present my country and culture in this film for my thesis project.

--Contrast

The difference between east and west cultures provides many interesting visual and audio elements for this film, such as:

- The priest's suit and the Buddhist priest's suit
- Bible / cross and a chicken feather
- Organ and suona horn

The most dramatic contrast between the two cultures is the ceremony. West tends to be solemn and simple to show one's respect at a funeral, yet East tends to be noisy and luxury.

Posheng Chiang
05/01/2008

FATHER'S LAST WISH BUDGET

Budget:	\$11,781	Start Date:	May-08
Advisor:	Malcolm Spaul	End Date:	May-09
		Run Time:	20 minutes
		Format:	HD
SUMMARY BUDGET			
01-00 Script			
02-00 Producers Unit			1000
03-00 Direction			0
04-00 Cast			0
			1,500
TOTAL ABOVE-THE-LINE			
05-00 Production Staff			
06-00 Extra Talent		In Kind	0
07-00 Production Design		In Kind	0
08-00 Set Operations		In Kind	0
09-00 Set Dressing			1,000
10-00 Property			200
11-00 Wardrobe			400
12-00 Makeup and Hairdressing			300
13-00 Electrical			100
14-00 Camera			100
15-00 Sound			2,000
16-00 Transportation			100
17-00 Location Expenses			300
			100
TOTAL PRODUCTION			
18-00 Editorial			
19-00 Music			800
20-00 Post Production Sound			500
21-00 Graphic Art Work			500
			150
TOTAL POST-PRODUCTION			
22-00 Travel Expenses			
			1000
TOTAL OTHER			
Total Above-The-Line			
Total Below-The-Line			1,700
Total Above and Below-The-Line			8,545
Contingency @ 15%			10,245
GRAND TOTAL ABOVE-THE-LINE			
			11,781

Budget_1

Posheng Chiang
05/01/2008

FATHER'S LAST WISH BUDGET

	Amnt.	Units	x	Rate	Sub-Total	Total
01-00 Script						
01-01 Writer's Salary					0	In Kind
01-02 Research					0	In Kind
01-03 Script Copying					100	100
Total for 01-00						100
02-00 Producers Unit						
02-01 Executive Producer					0	In Kind
02-02 Producer					0	In Kind
Total for 02-00						0
03-00 Direction						
03-01 Director					0	In Kind
Total for 03-00						0
04-00 Cast						
04-01 Lead Actors						
Role of Eric					800	800
04-02 Supporting Actors					800	800
Total for 04-00						1,600
TOTAL ABOVE-THE-LINE						1,700
BELOW-THE-LINE						
05-00 Production Staff						
05-01 First Assistant Director					0	In Kind
05-02 Production Coordinator					0	In Kind
Total for 05-00						0
06-00 Extra Talent						
06-01 Extras					0	In Kind
06-02 Extras Casting Fee					0	In Kind
Total for 06-00						0
07-00 Production Design						
07-01 Production Designer					0	In Kind
07-02 Assistants					0	In Kind
07-03 Research/Materials					0	In Kind
Total for 07-00						0
08-00 Set Operations						
08-01 First Grip					0	In Kind
08-02 Second Grip					0	In Kind
08-03 Craft Service	100	10			1,000	1,000
Total for 08-00						1,000

Budget_2

Posheng Chiang
05/01/2008

FATHER'S LAST WISH BUDGET

09-00 Set Dressing			
09-01 Purchases	0	In Kind	
09-02 Rentals	200	200	
09-03 Loss & Damage	0	In Kind	
Total for 09-00			200
10-00 Property			
10-01 Property Master	0	In Kind	
10-02 Purchases	0	200	
10-03 Rentals	0	200	
Total for 10-00			400
11-00 Wardrobe			
11-01 Costume Designer	0	In Kind	
11-02 Expendables	0	In Kind	
11-03 Purchases	150	150	
11-04 Rentals	150	150	
11-05 Cleaning & Dyeing	0	In Kind	
11-06 Loss & Damage	0	In Kind	
Total for 11-00			300
12-00 Make-Up and Hairdressing			
12-01 Key make-Up Artist	0	In Kind	
12-02 Additional Make-up Artists	0	In Kind	
12-03 Purchases	100	100	
Total for 12-00			100
13-00 Electrical			
13-01 Gaffer	0	In Kind	
13-02 Lighting Equipment Rentals	1,000	1,000	
Total for 13-00			1,000
14-00 Camera			
14-01 Director of Photography	0	In Kind	
14-02 First Assistant Camera	0	In Kind	
14-03 Still Photographer	0	In Kind	
14-04 Camera Package	1,500	1,500	
14-05 Crane & Dolly Equipment	500	500	
Total for 14-00			2,000
15-00 Sound			
15-01 Mixer	0	In Kind	
15-02 Boom Operator	0	In Kind	
15-03 Expendables	100	100	
Total for 15-00			100

Posheng Chiang
05/01/2008

FATHER'S LAST WISH BUDGET

16-00 Transportation			
16-05 Gas	300	300	
Total for 16-00			300
17-00 Location Expenses			
17-01 Permits	0	In Kind	
17-02 Parking	100	100	
17-03 Location Site Rental	0	In Kind	
Total for 17-00			100
18-00 Editorial			
18-01 Editor	0	In Kind	
18-02 Screening Copies (HD DVD) & Film festival	500	500	
18-03 Harddrives	300	300	
Total for 18-00			800
19-00 Music			
19-01 Composer	500	500	
19-02 Recording	0	In Kind	
Total for 19-00			500
20-00 Post Production Sound			
20-01 Conforming	0	In Kind	
20-02 ADR & Foley	500	500	
20-03 Foley Artist	0	In Kind	
20-04 Mix	0	In Kind	
Total for 20-00			500
21-00 Graphic Art Work			
21-01 Posters	150	150	
Total for 21-00			150
22-00 Travel Expenses			
22-01 Rochester to Taiwan	1000	1000	
Total for 22-00			1000
Contingency @ 15%			9,718
GRAND TOTAL			11,781
Total Above-The-Line			1,700
Total Below-The-Line			8,545
Total Above and Below-The-Line			10,245

Budget_4

FATHER'S LAST WISH

Script	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09
Location Scout															
Casting/Rehearsals															
Storyboards															
Principal Photography															
Editing/Rough Cut															
Pick-up Shoots															
Sound Mixing															
Fine Cut															
Color Correction															
Music															
Screening															
Paper															

Budget: \$11781
Advisor: Malcolm Spaul

Run Time: 20 minutes
Format: HD

Appendix 2 – Script

FADE IN

FUNG-MEI (V.O.)

Sin-Min, we're going to America to see Papa.

SIN-MIN (V.O.)

I can finally see Papa!

PICTURE A - NEW YORK, USA (20 YEARS BEFORE)

In a wide area of grass, **SIN-MIN**, son, poses with **YI-FON**, father, and **FUNG-MEI**, mother, when Sin-Min is six.

SIN-MIN (V.O.)

Mom, why does papa bring Eric to our house to live with us?

FUNG-MEI (V.O.)

He is your brother. You should take care of him.

PICTURE B - NEW YORK, USA (15 YEARS BEFORE)

At a beach, Sin-Min poses with Yi-Fon, Fung-Mei and **ERIC**, 5, Caucasian, stepson, when Sin-Min is twelve.

SIN-MIN (V.O.)

Why is he leaving this time?

FUNG-MEI (V.O.)

He said it's for a big deal in Kansas. He'll stay there for 6 months.

PICTURE C - NEW YORK, USA (6 MONTHS BEFORE)

At Sin-Min's master degree commencement, Sin-Min poses with Yi-Fon, Fung-Mei and Eric, when Sin-Min is twenty-six. Yi-Fon holds Sin-Min's shoulder proudly.

SIN-MIN (V.O.)

That was the last time we met before Papa went to Kansas.

EXT. CAR MOVING IN COUNTRYSIDE, TAIWAN – AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

YI-HONG, 58, Sin-Min's uncle, drives Sin-Min, Fung-Mei and Eric home from an airport. Along the road are enormous white flowers in bloom, like snow in May.

SIN-MIN (V.O.)

I never knew how to pose with my father, because I only had three opportunities to practice. I wish I had more chances, but I never expected this.

Sin-Min, holding Yi-Fon's portrait, sits in the front seat and puts the three pictures into his pocket. Eric, holding Yi-Fon's cremation urn, sits behind Eric. Fung-Mei sits next to Eric, always looking outside and never at the portrait. Yi-Hong twists the portrait to face front.

YI-HONG

Look, Yi-Fon, we are home.

The car moves towards a brick three-sided courtyard house. The house faces a wide rice field and there is a car-wide road in between. Before entering the road, the car passes a longan tree, as green as the rice field, on a small hill.

EXT. COURTYARD – LATER

Yi-Hong uses an umbrella to cover the portrait held by Sin-Min and leads him into the inner hall. Fung-Mei and Eric, holding the urn, follow them. **HUI-MEI**, 55, Yi-Hong's wife, and **YU-TIN**, 24, Yi-Hong's daughter stand with neighbors in the courtyard.

HUI-MEI

Sin-Min has grown up...is that the boy Yi-Fon had with the American woman... that white boy standing next to Fung-Mei?

YU-TIN

Mom, don't describe a person by color.

HUI-MEI

He does look white...this is so unfair that Fung-Mei had to raise him up.

INT. INNER HALL – LATER

Yi-Hong announces the urn Homecoming ceremony. Sin-Min locates the urn in front the Yi-Fon's spirit tablet on the pedestal for ancients and hangs the portrait on the wall. Yi-Hong burns incense sticks and distributes them to people, but only

Eric refuses to take one. Yi-Hong commands Eric to take one, in order to avoid conflict, Sin-Min quickly takes them.

INT. INNER HALL – NIGHT

A TAOIST PRIEST, 48, proposes how to hold Yi-Fon's funeral. Yi-Hong sits in front of people in the center. Sin-Min, Fung-Mei and Eric sit on a cane sofa. Hui-Mei, Yu-Tin and two relatives sit on another cane sofa.

TAOIST PRIEST
(holding a compass)
Yi-Fon's gravestone should face
southeast, where a swan goose flies.
This can result in great luck.

Yi-Hong nods and the relatives smile.

TAOIST PRIEST (CONT'D)
(holding a lunar calendar)
Yi-Fon should be buried before a full
moon night on the lunar calendar. That's
four days later. Follow my directions to
have a funeral would bring fortune to
generations of your family.

Yi-Hong and relatives nod harder. Fung-Mei looks at Yi-Hong confusingly. Eric looks at the Taoist priest curiously while Sin-Min keeps silent.

TAOIST PRIEST
(arousing people)
It's worthy to hold such a luxurious
funeral for Yi-Fon, because we all love
him so much and miss him deeply!

YI-HONG
(nodding – then smiling emotionally)
Yes! Yes!

Other relatives start to sob loudly.

ERIC
(whispering)
Are they crying or smiling?

SIN-MIN

Shut up. Don't be silly.

FUNG-MEI

Yi-Hong, I told you that Yi-Fon wanted a Christian funeral. It's his last wish.

YI-HONG

Fung-Mei, you just got here. You should rest. I'll be in charge of the funeral.

Relatives and the Taoist priest nod their agreement.

ERIC

Uncle, it's Papa's funeral, and we will handle it.

YI-HONG

You? You are just an American. You know nothing about our way.

Sin-Min takes out Yi-Fon's will from his pocket.

SIN-MIN

(showing it to Yi-Hong)

Uncle, this is my father's will. He became a Christian and expected a Christian funeral -

YI-HONG

(glancing over the letter)

- It's in English...I don't know English.

SIN-MIN

Uncle, we're talking about my father's funeral, and we should respect his testament.

YI-HONG

Respect? (To Eric) He didn't even take incense sticks to your father's spirit tablet. Is this how you show your respect?

ERIC

Why do I have to take it?

Sin-Min holds Eric's arm.

SIN-MIN

Eric, behave yourself. Take Mom to her room to rest. Let me deal with this.

Eric leaves with Fung-Mei.

YI-HONG

Sin-Min, you are the oldest son of this family, and you should remember our tradition.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sin-Min and Fung-Mei spread a bamboo mat on the bed.

SIN-MIN

Mom, uncle just kept yelling at me, and insisted on a traditional funeral. We should have held the funeral in America.

FUNG-MEI

I understand what your uncle wants.

SIN-MIN

But this is Papa's decision, not ours.

FUNG-MEI

I think he will understand it. We'll talk to him later.

SIN-MIN

Mom, why did we have to come back?

FUNG-MEI

Sin-Min, we moved to America many years ago, but this is still our home. We're like leaves that fall from the tree to the ground. I wasn't with your father in Kansas when he died, and if I don't fulfill his last wishes, I'll feel guilty.

SIN-MIN

We don't owe him anything. Mom, he abandoned us in Taiwan, had an affair, and sent Eric to live with us.

FUNG-MEI

That's all in the past. I want to come back here as well. I am all alone there without your dad.

SIN-MIN

But mom, I wanna go back.

FUNG-MEI

Let's just finish the funeral first.

SIN-MIN

All right.

Sin-Min leaves. Fung-Mei sits down in front of an old wood dressing table and wipes the mirror. She pauses to see her image in the mirror. Then She opens drawers to look for something. From the last drawer, she takes out a photo frame, inside a picture taken on her wedding.

BEGINS FLASHBACK

EXT. LONGAN TREE – EVENING – 25 YEARS BEFORE

Under the longan tree, Yi-Fon, with a brown sunglass, carries on a big piece of luggage. Yi-Hong honks the car horn. Yi-Fong waves to Fung-Mei, who holds little Sin-Min in hand.

FUNG-MEI

Yi-Fon, please takes us to America soon.

Yi-Fon smiles and gets into the car. Fung-Mei watches the car leaving.

BACK TO PRESENT

Fung-Mei takes off her jade bracelet and notices a double-happiness sticker for her wedding still stuck on the mirror. She takes the sticker off but it breaks into pieces in her hand.

EXT/INT. INNER HALL – LATER

Eric wipes the dust on the urn. He turns to stares at Yi-Fon's portrait.

EIRC

Papa, I'm in Taiwan now. I wish you could be here with me. It's still a little bit surreal that you've left us but I'll keep all

the good memories of you close to my heart.

Yi-Hong walks in with a ton of joss papers. He puts them on the table and burns a incense stick.

YI-HONG

What are you doing here?

ERIC

I came to see papa. I miss him very much, uncle. I want to apologize for my bad manners earlier.

YI-HONG

If you really miss your papa, then take this incense stick.

ERIC

Sorry uncle, I really can't do it. It's against my religion.

YI-HONG

Why is this so difficult for you?

ERIC

Sorry, uncle. Good night.

Eric leaves. Yi-Hong turns on the radio on the table and it plays a Buddhist-Text song. Yi-Hong sits down and folds the joss papers into lotuses.

YI-HONG (to the urn)

Yi-Fon, I'll keep the light on all night to guide your soul back.

INT. INNER HALL – MORNING – THE NEXT DAY

Sin-Min, Fung-Mei, Eric and pastor Huang, 48, discuss the plan for the funeral.

SIN-MIN

Pastor, How soon could the funeral be finished?

FUNG-MEI

Sin-Min, that's rude.

PASTOR

Ma'am, It's okay. Mr. Chan, I believe we can hold your father's funeral this Sunday,

though this is last minute since only three days are left. I'm confident we can accomplish this with the help of our brethren in the church.

FUNG-MEI

In only in 3 days?

SIN-MIN

Sooner is better. I can't stand being around my uncle anymore.

PASTOR

Sin-min, I totally understand how you are felling, as I have helped many people in the same situation as yourself, a conflict between faiths. However, your insistence shows how much you love your father, and I truly adore it. God bless you and your father.

Yi-Hong with a conical hat walks past the inner hall and notices the pastor inside.

YI-HONG

What's he doing here?

SIN-MIN

Uncle, this is Pastor Huang.

A harsh car-horn comes from outside courtyard.

YI-HONG

What I have told you! My Taoist priest will arrange this funeral. Is that clear enough -

A loud quarrel with harsh car-horns comes again.

YI-HONG (CONT'D)

- What's going on out there!

EXT. GATE – LATER

In front of the gate, CHON, 33, drives a truck loaded with cages of chickens, and TON, 35, drives a truck loaded with aluminum window frames. Their trucks face each other and they keep honking and yelling each other. Yi-Hong appears between the trucks.

YI-HONG

What are you guys doing?

CHON

Yi-Hong, he wants to block my way!

TON

But Yi-Hong, I was here before him.

CHON / TON

You liar! / Move your ass out of my way!

YI-HONG

(shouting)

Shut up! You're both being rude. I'm
arranging a funeral inside!

CHON / TON

(guiltily)

Sorry / I'm so sorry.

CHON

...Oh, right...I heard it's for Yi-Fon.

TON

But Yi-Hong, I see no altar or a Taoist
priest.

YI-HONG

I'm setting a...that's none of your
business. Now, you back off!

TON

What? Why me.

Yi-HONG

No more questions. Back off or you'll
both be stuck here.

TON pulls his car back. Yi-Hong steps inside.

EXT. COURTYARD – LATER

Yi-Hong returns to courtyard in anger and shouts at Sin-Min.

Yi-HONG

Did you see that? What a mess! No altar, no Taoist priest, so nobody knows we're arranging a funeral here.

ERIC

But Uncle, this is my father's funeral. We don't show off in front of people.

YI-HONG

What if these neighbors spread rumors that I'm too mean to hold a funeral for my brother? That will bring great shame on me! Get that pastor out of my house!

SIN-MIN

Uncle, Instead of arguing, maybe you should understand what a Christian funeral is.

Yi-Hong doesn't answer Sin-Min and walks towards the side-living room.

SIN-MIN

I'm sorry about this, Pastor Huang.

PASTOR

That's fine, Sin-Min. Don't be frustrated. God understands, he knows you're doing what's right.

INT. INNER HALL – LATER

Eric closely observes the spirit tablets and God puppies. Sin-Min sits on the cane sofa.

ERIC

(pointing to the God puppy)
Who is he?

SIN-MIN

He's one of the Chinese Gods.

ERIC

How many Gods do you have?

SIN-MIN

I don't know, a lot.

ERIC

What are these tablets for?

SIN-MIN

They represent the spirit of our ancestors.

Eric picks up one tablet to observe.

ERIC

Which one is Papa's?

SIN-MIN

Stop! I'm trying to think here.

ERIC

You Know what? I think I like this place. I want to stay here to learn more about it.

SIN-MIN

What?

ERIC

I'm serious. I know Mom want to stay as well and I can stay with her.

SIN-MIN

What are you going to do for a living here?

ERIC

I can do many things here, like...teach English.

SIN-MIN

Don't you see I have enough problems? It's not as easy as you think.

ERIC

Sin-Min, I'm not successful like you. You have a job in a bank, a good car, I don't have the same opportunities that you have in America, but here, I might be able to find my way and be able to take care of Mom.

SIN-MIN

I worked really hard to get that position.
Besides, she's my mom; I'll take care of
her.

Sin-Min walks towards the portrait.

SIN-MIN

Do you see what a mess you've left to me?

Sin-Min walks out of the room and Eric chases after him.

EXT. RICE FIELD – LATER

Sin-Min walks on the river dike along the rice field. Eric runs to catch up.

ERIC

Sin-Min, what's wrong?

SIN-MIN

Leave me alone.

ERIC

I know you've had tons of pressure on you,
but I'm trying to help.

SIN-MIN

No, you can't help, and you have no
clue as to what I had to face from all of
this. He left us in Taiwan for seven
years, and since you became my
brother, I had to support this family. Now
he just runs away and never comes
back!

Sin-Min starts to run faster and faster.

ERIC

No, you're wrong. I understand full well
what you and Mom have done for me.

Sin-Min runs far and leaves Eric standing behind alone.

INT. INNER HALL – EVENING

Yi-Hong puts Yi-Fon's will on the table and burns incense sticks to worship Yi-Fon's spirit tablet.

YI-HONG

Yi-Fon, why didn't you come back home earlier? They say you want a Christian funeral. I don't believe it.

Yi-Hong grabs the divining blocks and holds them above his head.

YI-HONG

Yi-Fon, do you want a traditional funeral?

Yi-Hong casts the divining blocks on the ground. Two yin-sides are up. Yi-Hong picks up divining blocks.

YI-HONG

No? You don't want me to do this? Don't worry about my money...I can afford it.

Yi-Hong holds the divining blocks above his head and casts them again on the ground. Two yang-sides are up.

YI-HONG

No? You're sure? How come...you must be angry with me for not burning stuff for you.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE – LATER

Fung-Mei takes out the last blanket in a bucket. After twisting to dry it, Fung-Mei hand it to Hua-Mei. Hua-Mei hangs it on a bamboo cloth stand.

HUI-MEI

Fung-Mei, thanks for helping me.

FUNG-MEI

That's fine. I used to do this job in New York. I was a part-time housecleaner. Can you imagine how big their underpants are? It's like ...like this blanket.

HUI-MEI

(laughing-then a sighing)

That's huge...but I thought you were going there for good. When you knew

Yi-Fon had an affair and a son, you should have come back.

FUNG-MEI

I had no choice. My house in Taiwan was already sold. Besides, I thought it was better for Sin-Min to have an American education.

HUA-MEI

Whatever, it's all past and you're home now. Go rest. I'll make a dinner.

FUNG-MEI

Thanks.

Hua-Mei leaves with the blanket. Fung-Mei stares at the longan tree.

BEGINS FLASHBACK

EXT. LONGAN TREE – EVENING – 20YEARS BEFORE

Under the longan tree, Fung-Mei carries on a big luggage and zips up Sin-Min's jacket. Yi-Hong honks the car horn.

FUNG-MEI

Sin-Min, we're going to America to see Papa.

SIN-MIN

I can finally see Papa!

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. LONGAN TREE – EVENING –PRESENT

Under the longan tree, Fung-Mei strokes her jade bracelet.

EXT. RICE FIELD – NIGHT

Sin-Min fires a matchstick and burns the Joss paper sacrifices.

YI-HONG

Yi-Fon, this is all for you, a big house with servants.

Yi-Hong throws a Joss paper convertible into the fire.

YI-HONG

This car is powerful with an open top.
It's really fascinating. You must love it.

Yi-Hong throws a Joss paper gold watch, a paper cell phone and a paper wallet.

YI-HONG

And this famous-brand stuff really fits
your status as a businessman.

Sin-Min and Fung-Mei appear from inside.

SIN-MIN

What is burning!

YI-HONG

This is all for your dad. (to fire) Yi-Fon,
come to take it for a rich rebirth.

FUNG-MEI

Yi-Hong, Yi-Fon won't need this.

YI-HONG

How do you know that he doesn't like it?

Yi-Hong throws more Joss paper bills and paper money checks into the fire.

SIN-MIN

Uncle, this is nothing but superstition.

YI-HONG

Superstition? Let me prove it to you.
Let's go to ask your father.

INT. INNER HALL – LATER

Yi-Hong holds the divining blocks above his head and takes a bow in front of Yi-Fon's spirit tablet. Fung-Mei and Sin-Min, appearing impatient, stand behind Yi-Hong.

YI-HONG

Yi-Fon, do you like what I just sent to you?

Yi-Hong casts the divining blocks into the air. The blocks fall on the ground. One yin-side and one yan-side are up on the ground.

YI-HONG

See, that's yin-yan. Your dad likes it.

SIN-MIN

Oh please Uncle, this only happened by chance.

YI-HONG

No, it's your father's will to result in yin-yan. If you don't believe me, try it yourself.

Yi-Hong hands the divining blocks in front of Sin-Min's face.

SIN-MIN

No, I won't do this.

YI-HONG

You won't do it because you're afraid of seeing the truth.

Yi-Hong turns to Yi-Fon's spirit tablet and holds the divining blocks above his head.

YI-HONG

Yi-Fon, do you want me to arrange a traditional funeral for you?

SIN-MIN

Uncle stop it! This means nothing...

Yi-Hong casts the divining blocks into the air again. All of the three watch the blocks spinning on the ground. Finally two yin-sides up.

YI-HONG

Two yin-sides? Yi-Fon, you really don't want it?

Yi-Hong sits down on the cane sofa disappointedly and Sin-Min appears released.

SIN-MIN

See, Uncle? I told you he didn't want it.

INT. CHURCH – MORNING – THE NEXT DAY

Yi-Fon's portrait is set on the stage. Two people are working on the decoration behind the stage. Pastor Huang, holding a brochure, explains the procedure of the funeral to Sin-Min, Fung-Mei and Eric. Yi-Hong stands outside and observes inside.

SIN-MIN

Uncle, I don't expect your coming.

Yi-Hong walks into the church.

YI-HONG

I just stopped by to take a look.

PASTOR

Welcome, Mr. Chan, we're talking about the service, and I'd like to have your opinion.

YI-HONG

I'm about to leave.

Yi-Hong goes to sit down. Eric brings a cup of tea to Yi-Hong.

YI-HONG

This is how you set the stage? So shabby.

ERIC

Uncle, they're still working on that.

Pastor Huang shows the brochure to Sin-Min and Fung-Mei.

PASTOR

Ma'am, this is the brochure for tomorrow. We'll start at nine o'clock. And all the brothers and sister will stand by at eight-thirty -

YI-HONG

- I'm the only brother. There is no sister.

FUNG-MEI

Yi-Hong, he doesn't mean it that way.

PASTOR

Mr. Chan, we are all sons of God so we are a family, like brothers and sisters.

YI-HONG

Not me.

PASTOR

The funeral would be held to focus on comforting the rest of the family. I'll say the prayer after the chorus has finished singing, and then Sin-Min will make the eulogy.

Pastor Huang takes a glance at Yi-Hong.

PASTOR

We need to make sure that everyone understands that at the end of the service, we will take flowers but no incense sticks for worship.

YI-HONG

No incense sticks?

SIN-MIN

I think flowers mean the same thing.

YI-HONG

Fine!

PASTOR

And we'll set the portrait and the urn in front of a cross on the stage, dressed with lilies and candles. Besides...

FUNG-MEI

Please continue.

PASTOR

I notice that you have set Yi-Fon's spirit tablet in your place. This is forbidden in church, because we're not allowed to worship any other gods. This is our cannon, and we must obey it.

YI-HONG

We're talking about my brother! If you take the spirit tablet out, it's like taking Yi-Fon out of this family.

No altar, no Taoist priests? Not even a spirit tablet? How could Yi-Fon's spirit be comforted and re-birthed well.

SIN-MIN

Uncle, Papa believes in God, so he can go to the heaven for a better life.

YI-HONG

You liar! Do you think you can fool me into believing this bullshit! I wouldn't have known about it if I didn't come today.

SIN-MIN

Uncle, we're doing thing all because of Papa. Uncle, I can explain everything to you later, but I don't have time now. We'll hold the funeral tomorrow.

YI-HONG

That's not gonna happened!

ERIC

Uncle, I can explain it to you right now.

Yi-Hong quickly turns and walks out of the inner hall.

SIN-MIN

I knew this would happen. Mom, sometimes we need stand for ourselves. Mercy is not always the best policy.

Sin-Min gives a long sigh.

SIN-MIN

Pastor Huang, I'm sorry about this, but please, let's stick to the plan.

MONTAGE

1. STORE – EVENING – Yi-Hong talks with the Taoist priest at his store.
2. BEDROOM – NIGHT – Eric kneels down and prays.

3. INNER HALL – NIGHT – Fung-Mei kneels down and takes a bow to Yi-Fon's portrait.
4. OUTSIDE INNER HALL – Sin-Min leans against the wall and looks at the three family pictures on the brochure. He closes the brochure and stares at the title "MEMORIAL SERVICE for MR. YI-FON TSENG" on the cover. Tears well up his eyes unconsciously.

INT. CHURCH – MORNING – THE NEXT DAY

The sound of piano rises. The chorus sings a hymn in front of the stage. Pastor Huang leads people to pray and make an address to comfort people. Sin-Min, Fung-Mei and Eric sit in the first row. Hui-Mei and Yu-Tin sit in the second row. Some relatives and friends sit behind them.

SIN-MIN

Where is your father?

YU-TIN

I don't know. He left early this morning.

PASTOR

Now, our beloved brother Yi-Fon is on his way to paradise. There, he will enjoy the sweetest fruits and beautiful scenery. In the presence of the FATHER, he will be far happier than we are here on earth.

A loud noise and music comes from outside.

PASTOR (CONT'D)

We don't have to feel sorrow or cry for him -

Yi-Hong enters the church with the Taoist priest and a Chinese band.

YI-HONG

- Hey, listen to me. Don't be fooled by him! His words will result in a bad rebirth for Yi-Fon.

Everyone in church turn to look at Yi-Hong surprisingly.

YI-HONG (CONT'D)

Fung-Mei, I can't believe you would really do this to your husband. I can't allow this to happen to my brother.

PASTOR

Mr. Chan. Please don't interrupt us.

YI-HONG

You guys really think this is right? No altar, no Taoist priest, and no traditional ceremonies?

Some of the relatives begin to whisper.

YI-HONG

Today, no matter what, I must hold a traditional funeral for Yi-Fon.

Yi-Hong quickly steps towards the urn. The Chinese band starts to play.

SIN-MIN

Uncle, what are you trying to do?

Sin-Min runs to stop Yi-Hong. Eric attempts to do it as well, but he can't. The Taoist priest stops him and dances in front of him with holding a bell and a feather stick. The Chinese band plays harder with the dance.

TAOIST PRIEST

*&%\$#@!...(AN INCANTATION IN CHINESE)

ERIC

Stop it! Get out of here. This is my father's funeral.

Eric grabs the Taoist priest's arm to stop him. The Chinese band plays music more and more intensely.

FUNG-MEI

All of you stop it. This is Yi-Fon's funeral!

Pastor Huang runs to stop the Taoist priest by holding the feather stick.

PASTOR

This is a church, not your altar.

TAOIST PRIEST

My incantation and performance would
result in salvation for you.

In front of the stage, Sin-Min and Yi-Hong both pull and drag with holding the urn.

SIN-MIN

Let it go. This is my father!

YI-HONG

No way. This is my brother!

SIN-MIN

Uncle, don't make me force you.

YI-HONG

Do you respect me as your uncle? Give
the urn to me!

SIN-MIN

I won't let my father go!

YI-HONG

I'll take the urn to the Taoist priest, and
he can pray for a better rebirth for your
father. Can your Jesus do that? By the
way, I guess it's all because of that
American woman that your father
became a Christian.

SIN-MIN

You shut up!

YI-HONG

How can you leave all tradition behind
you? No matter how long you have
stayed in America, you are still
Taiwanese and the oldest son of our
family!

SIN-MIN

I'm so sick of you. I wouldn't have come
back without my mother's insistence.
This is my father's funeral, not yours!

YI-HONG

How dare you!

Fung-Mei walks onto the stage and grabs the microphone.

FUNG-MEI

Please stop it, everyone!

Sin-Min and Yi-Hong still fight against the urn. The Taoist priest, chased after by pastor Huang, chases after Eric waving the feather stick. The drum in the Chinese band speeds up the beat with a harsh sound of trumpet. Around the stage, the Taoist priest lifts his feather stick high, and attempt to hit Eric. In this mess, the Taoist priest hits Yi-Hong and makes him off-balance falling on the ground. The urn is released and goes flying in the air. Everyone pauses and stares at the urn.

SIN-MIN / ERIC / YI-HONG

Dad! / Papa! / Yi-Fong!

FUNG-MEI

No...Yi-Fon...

After seconds, the urn is broken on the ground and the ashes spread out. A silence emerges that everyone hears Fung-Mei's voice clearly.

FUNG-MEI

Everyone, stop it. This is Yi-Fon's funeral. Look at what's you've done Yi-Hon! Can you make it any worse?

YI-HONG

(guiltily)

I didn't...mean...to break it.

Fung-Mei walks off the stage to grab a wood box coming with the urn. She steps to the urn and kneels down to pick up the ashes and replaces them into the box.

FUNG-MEI

During these years, although Yi-Fon didn't take cares of us well, I never asked him or anyone for anything. Now, to fulfill my responsibility as a wife, I ask you to allow me to make his last wish come true.

YI-HONG (to the pastor and Taoist priest)
Don't move. Keep blocking the wind.

Sin-Min and Eric kneels down to help Fung-Mei pick up the ash. Yi-Hong joins them as well. After a while, Fung-Mei sends Sin-Min to take the portrait and gives the box to Eric. Before closing the box, she takes off her jade bracelet and put into the box. The bracelet sinks into the ash.

SIN-MIN
Mom...your bracelet...

FUNG-MEI
Your father gave it to me since we got married, and I think it is time to give it away.

Fung-Mei, Sin-Min and Eric leaves the church. The piano rises again. Pastor Huang and the chorus follow them. Yi-Hong leads the Taoist priest and the Chinese band to catch up.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

On the way to the cemetery, there is a country road across a wide rice field. Sin-Min, holding the portrait, walks with Fung-Mei. Eric, holding the box and followed by the pastor and the chorus, walks behind Sin-Min.

FUNG-MEI
I thought all our family could stay together after his trip to Kansas, but ...

SIN-MIN
Mom...maybe it's better for Papa. Now he can go wherever he wants.

Sin-Min holds Fung-Mei's hand tightly. After them, the two lines of people push each other on the narrow country road. Yi-Hong comes next to Eric. Eric passes the box to Yi-Hong. Yi-Hong takes it over and holds it tightly. The road becomes narrower and narrower, and the two lines of people become one.

INT. INNER HALL – EVENING

Sin-Min, carrying a baggage, enters the inner hall and looks up at the portrait. After a while, he puts his baggage down and turns to grab the divining blocks on the pedestal. He holds the divining blocks high by facing the portrait and casts the blocks into air. Then two yin-yan-sides up. Sin-Min smiles at the portrait and carries on his baggage walking out of the inner hall.

MONTAGE

SIN-MIN (V. O.)

I always remember the day we took the flight from Taiwan to New York. All I was thinking was that I could see my dada and call him 'Dad' for the first time in my life. So many years have passed since then and we've been through a lot. I know you always tried hard for the family although you didn't show it, we know in our hearts that you tried very hard. Wherever you are now, I'm sure you are in a place of peace.

1. A wild shot of the house in sunset.
2. A wild shot of the green rice in sunset.
3. Under the longan tree, Yi-Hong honks the car horn Sin-Min waves to Fung-Mei and Eric. Sin-min carries his baggage on and gets into car. The car leaves. Fung-Mei and Eric waves to the car.

FADE OUT

Appendix 3 - Stills













轉
屋下
HOMECOMING

苑裡基督教山腳長老教會
萬安生命事業機構 Won-Ann International Co., Ltd.
天地仁和電影製作公司 Smash and Grab Productions
合瑪製作股份有限公司 Hordmart Production LTD.
阿榮企業有限公司 Arrow cinematic group
力榮影視器材有限公司 Lee Ron Film&TV Equipment Co.
客家電視台 Taiwan Hakka TV

My family & Ming-Chieh Li
我的家人 & 李明潔

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Leandro
李安卓

Eric Tu
涂百鋒

Hong-Chi Yang
洪綺陽

Sih-Ci Luo
羅思琦



轉

HOME COMING

屋

PRODUCER & ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JUYAN-CHI HUANG 黃娟綺
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY SHENG-FONG CHIANG 江申豐
COSTUME DESIGN YI-SIAN JHENG 鄭意嫻
ART DIRECTOR HUI-CI CHEN 陳惠琪
NAI-JIN YE 葉乃菁
EDITED BY PO-SHENG CHIANG 姜博陞
MUSIC BY CHENG-YI WANG 汪正一
WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY PO-SHENG CHIANG 姜博陞

TAIWAN HAKKA TV PRESENTS. A PO-SHENG CHIANG PRODUCTION



A collage of 24 photographs documenting the production of the film 'The Way Home' (2013). The images show various scenes from the movie, including the main characters, the production crew, and the filming locations. The photos are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some images showing the crew operating cameras and others showing the characters in their environment. The collage captures the behind-the-scenes work and the visual storytelling of the film.



Appendix 5 – Shooting Schedule

Date / Days	Scene Number	Scene	Location	Outline	Time	NT / In Set	Days	新民	芳美	董宏	董建	恩妹	阿忠	阿英	亮亮	新民	其他演員	Costume / Make up	Props	Note	
0407(二)	1	車上/苗栗鄉下	高速公路後龍路邊	蔡宏開車載著新民他們回到苗栗老家	日	外	1	1	1	1								新民西裝	柏父車手/蔡建德/三級全	柏柏樂	
	3	翁得岩外道路	翁得岩附近	蔡宏開車載著新民他們去翁得岩	日	外	1	1	1	1								新民西裝	柏父車手/蔡建德/三級全		
	1	車上/苗栗鄉下	樹園墳場	新民芳美Denny步出墳場	日	外	1	1	1	1									新民西裝/三級全	柏父車手/蔡建德/三級全	
	16	門前田野	蔡宏墳墓前	蔡宏燒紙燭金銀玉文給董建	夜	外	2	2	2	2									新民西裝/三級全	蔡宏車/新民芳美行李	
	14	三和院門口(回憶)	三合院	新民和芳美要出發去美國	昏	外			33歲	36歲							2		新民西裝	新民西裝	
	6	三和院門口(回憶)	三合院	董建出國前跟芳美新民道別	日	外			26歲	33歲	30歲								新民西裝	新民西裝	
0408(三)	25	三和院門口	三合院	新民離去 Eric 和芳美送他	昏	外	6	5	5	5									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	11	三和院門口	三合院	新民和 Eric 在後面道別	日	外	2	2	2	2									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	8	三和院門口	三合院	新民芳美發現 Eric 封住車門	日	內	2	2	2	2									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	9b	三和院門口	三合院	蔡宏發現 Eric 封住車門	日	內	2	2	2	2									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	5	三和院門口	三合院	新民跟 Eric 道別後回來	夜	內	1	1	1	1									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	3a	翁得岩	翁得岩	蔡宏帶著 Eric 進入翁得岩	日	內	1	1	1	1									新民西裝	新民西裝	
0409(四)	19	翁得岩	翁得岩	新民拿了父親的骨灰罐往外走	昏	內	3	3											新民西裝	新民西裝	
	10	翁得岩	翁得岩	Eric 對新民說好話,他留下來	日	內	2	2	2	2									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	24	翁得岩(回憶)	翁得岩	新民在神桌前跟董建道別	昏	內	6	5		2									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	17	翁得岩	翁得岩	新民和 Eric 在後面道別	夜	內	2	2	2	2									新民西裝	新民西裝	
	18	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	3	3	3	3							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/林孝/蔡建德小冊子	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	21	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	4	4	4	4							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
0410(五)	20	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	4	4	4	4							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	7	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	1	1	1	1							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	5b	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	1	1	1	1							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
0411(六)	22	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	4	4	4	4							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	12	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	2	2	2	2							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	24	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	6	5									兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
0412(日)	4	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	1	1	1	1							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	13	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	2	2	2	2							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	9	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	2	2	2	2							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	9b	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	2	2	2	2							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	
	23	翁得岩	翁得岩	我師和新民他們講葬禮流程	晨	內	4	4	4	4							兩個好友	空詔服/法詔服	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	蔡建德/翁得岩/翁得岩/翁得岩	

Appendix 6 – Equipmet List

Camera

High Definition Camcorder " SONY HDW-F900"

HDC Adapter

Lens

T 1.9 ANGENIEUX 5.3-61mm HD Digital Cinematography 11.5 × Zoom lens in B4 mount

Filters

ND Grad Soft edge 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2

Black Pro Mist 1/8 1/4 1/2

Accessories

SONY 6" HD Monitor 機身監視器

SONY BVM-D9H5U 9" HD Monitor 監視器

Matte Box 遮光斗

Cart 推車

Head & Legs

Fluid Head 油壓頭

Tripod standard 高腳

Tripod baby 矮腳

Hi-Hat 香爐腳

攝大助 1 名 (**Focus Puller**)

攝助 1 名

HMI

1.2 K PAR × 2

575W × 1

200W PAR × 1

TUNGSTEN

1K × 1

650W × 2

Dedo Lights × 3 一組

FLUORESCENT

Kino Flo (5600°K & 3200°K)

2 呎 4 管 × 1

4 呎 4 管 × 1

C 型夾 × 4

大力夾 × 4

撐桿 × 2

C Stand × 8 with 紙框 & 黑旗板

黑布 6' × 6' 1 塊

Sand Bag 沙包 × 10

6 呎梯

耗材珍珠板 錫鉑紙黑紙大力膠帶 透明膠帶
 燈光瀘紙 (CTO, CTB, 柔光紙, 描圖紙, ND6)

燈光師 1 名 燈光大助 1 名 燈光助理 1 名